



PRESS RELEASE

Garching, 17 December 2007

Two young MPQ Scientists win ERC starting Grant

Two young scientists at the Max Planck Institute of Quantum Optics in Garching (Germany), Dr. Reinhard Kienberger and Dr. Tobias Kippenberg, have received this year's European Research Council (ERC) Starting Grant. Their proposals have been selected out of around 9000 applications. The grant will support the research of the scientists, both leaders of their own junior research group at MPQ, over a period of five years.

The European Research Council is the first pan-European funding body. It was set up in 2007 to support investigator driven frontier research. Its main aim is to stimulate scientific excellence by "supporting and encouraging the very best, truly creative scientist, engineers and scholars to be adventurous and take risks in their research." In the long term, it looks to substantially strengthen the European research system.

ERC grants are awarded to projects headed by young and established researchers, who are working in Europe. Proposals of applicants are reviewed by a panel of about 250 scientists. The first call for proposals in 2007 resulted in number of more than 9000 applications.

Dr. Tobias Kippenberg has studied physics at the Technical University of Aachen. In 1999 he moved to Caltech (California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, USA), where he received his Ph.D. in 2004. At the end of 2005 he returned to Germany and established the independent Max Planck junior research group "Laboratory of Photonics" at MPQ in the Division of Prof. Hänsch. His proposal that was now accepted by ERC aims at observing and exploring the emerging field of cavity optomechanics, which pertains to observing quantum phenomena of mesoscopic mechanical oscillators. In tandem his group will explore a novel method to detect label-free real-time single molecules of biochemical interest.

Dr. Reinhard Kienberger comes from Saalfelden in Austria. He got his Ph.D. at the Technical University of Vienna in 2002 on the subject "Subfemtosecond XUV Pulse Generation and Measurement". In 2004 he received the APART grant (Austrian Programme for Advanced Research and Technology) of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, which enabled him to spend 10 months at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (SLAC) at Stanford University (USA) in the same year. He started to work as a research scientist in the "Attosecond and High-Field Division" of Prof. Ferenc Krausz, Director at MPQ, in 2005. In 2006 he received the Sofja Kowalevskaja Prize by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and set up the independent Max-Planck junior research group "Attosecond Dynamics". Focus of his proposal now funded by ERC is the extension of attosecond metrology to condensed matter, setting the ground of the new field attosecond solid state spectroscopy.

Contact:

Dr. Tobias Kippenberg

Max Planck Institute of Quantum Optics
Hans-Kopfermann-Straße 1
85748 Garching
Phone: +49 - 89 / 32905 727
Fax: +49 - 89 / 32905 200
E-mail: tobias.kippenberg@mpq.mpg.de
<http://www.mpq.mpg.de/k-lab/>

Dr. Reinhard Kienberger

Max Planck Institute of Quantum Optics,
Hans-Kopfermann-Straße 1
85748 Garching
Phone: +49 - 89 / 32905 731
Fax: +49 - 89 / 32905 361
E-mail: reinhard.kienberger@mpq.mpg.de
<http://www.attoworld.de/junresgrps/attosecond-dynamics.html>